



State of Washington

## DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

Mailing Address: 600 Capitol Way N - Olympia, Washington 98501-1091 - (360) 902-2200, TDD (360) 902-2207

Main Office location: Natural Resources Building - 1111 Washington Street SE - Olympia, WA

### DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE (DNS)

**Name of Proposal:** DNS 15-053: METHOW FOREST REHABILITATION – BUCK ISLAND

#### Description of Proposal:

The “Buck Island Block” of the Methow Forest Rehabilitation Project is located on the Methow Wildlife Area (MWLA) covering approx. 160 assessed acres of forested and shrub-steppe habitat in the lowlands in the transition between shrub-steppe and forest ecosystem types. Approx. 25-30 acres is to be commercially thinned if possible, and an additional 40 acres is in need of non-commercial thinning. This and the remaining acreage in the project area will be burned according to prescription, and maintained with prescribed fire to retain desired ecosystem traits. (see maps attached)

These areas are a high priority for forest health management on WDFW lands due to high-risk of stand-replacing wildfire, insect and pathogen outbreaks, and current connected landscape of overstocked stands. Stand-replacing wildfire has been present in and around the project area within the last 10+ years. Reducing and/or restructuring available fuels, tree density, and canopy cover in these stands will decrease the risk of stand-replacing wildfire, and improve forest ecosystem resilience to disturbance. Where feasible, the project will use thinning prescriptions based on the ecological site potential, historic reconstruction surveys, and priority to reduce negative ecosystem impacts from severe wildfire, disease and insect damage, and improve wildlife habitat. All areas, regardless of need for silvicultural treatment, will be followed with prescribed fire that will include objectives to reduce logging slash, reduce fuels accumulated over time, and increase regeneration of fire-dependent plant species.

**Proponent/Applicant:** Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

Contact: Jamie Bass or Sherry Furnari

350 Bear Creek Road

Winthrop, WA 98862

(509) 996-2559

[Jamie.Bass@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:Jamie.Bass@dfw.wa.gov)

**Location of Proposal, including street, if any:** Buck Island Block of the WDFW Methow Wildlife Area, about 3 miles north of Winthrop, Okanogan County, Washington: Township 36N, Range 21E, Section 34.

**Lead Agency:** Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

WDFW has determined that this proposal will likely not have a significant adverse impact on the environment. Therefore, state law<sup>1</sup> does not require an environmental impact statement (EIS). WDFW made this determination of nonsignificance (DNS) after we reviewed the environmental checklist and other information on file with us.

We issued this DNS according to state rules.<sup>2</sup> We will **not act on this proposal for 14 days**

from the date we issued the DNS. Agencies, affected tribes, and members of the public are invited to comment on this proposal or DNS. We must receive your comments within 14 days of the date of this letter. The comment period will end at **5:00 pm on October 15, 2015**.

**Method of Comment:** The following procedures shall govern the method to comment on agency SEPA proposals. Comments received through these procedures are part of the official SEPA record for this proposal.

You can submit your comments any one of the following ways:

- Email to [SEPAdesk2@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:SEPAdesk2@dfw.wa.gov)
- Online at the WDFW SEPA website comment link at: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/sepa/>
- Fax to (360) 902-2946;
- Mail to the address below.

**Responsible Official:** Lisa Wood


**Position/Title:** SEPA/NEPA Coordinator, WDFW Regulatory Services Section

**Address:** 600 Capitol Way North, Olympia, WA 98501-1091

After the comment period closes, applicants may view the updated status of this proposal on the WDFW SEPA website: <http://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/sepa/>. Once the status is posted as final, applicants and permittees may take action on the proposal. When a proposal is modified or withdrawn, notice will be given in accordance with state law.<sup>1</sup>

If you have questions about this DNS or the details of the proposal, contact Lisa Wood at the address, e-mail, or fax number above; you can also call her at (360) 902-2260.

**DATE OF ISSUE:** October 1, 2015

**SIGNATURE:** 

Footnotes

1. RCW 43.21C.030(2)(c)
2. WAC 197-11-340(2).

SEPA Log Number: 15-053.dns